

LITERATURE CITED

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NOTE ON THE SWARMING OF BRACHYMYRMEX SP.

(Hymenoptera: Formicidae)

On the evening of August 15, 1950, between 6:35 and 7:05 p.m. (Pacific daylight saving time), above the lawn on the south edge of the State Capitol Grounds at Sacramento, California, the writers observed large swarms of *Brachymyrmex* sp.¹ A swarm containing several thousands of the small males was first observed while looking into the direction of the sun. The central mass of the swarm was about four feet in diameter and occupied a space from about three to eight feet above the ground. Small masses of males would at times increase the speed of their frenzied dance and would form small cylinders of blurred wings and bodies which would move up and away from the larger body and after a few seconds return to the slower moving swarm. After the discovery of the first swarm an examination of the place revealed that over an area of lawn of at least 100 by 100 feet there were four additional swarms of males in flight in addition to numerous flying individuals filling the entire area. One of these swarms reached a height of approximately fifteen feet. Occasionally smaller numbers of the ants would form several small cylinders as noted above. Some males and females were noted crawling about in the grass. A few females were seen flying about and were not intimately associated with the main swarms of males. A section of shaded lawn separated from the above mentioned area by a row of trees also contained at least one large swarm which was more difficult to see because of the lack of sun due to surrounding trees. Still another swarm of *Brachymyrmex* was observed at the opposite north end of the grounds. In an adjoining fountain many hundreds of fallen specimens were observed on the surface of the water where they could not escape. Meteorological conditions: still air, bright sunlight, temperature 97 degrees F.

—P. H. ARNAUD and L. W. QUATE.

¹Determined by M. R. Smith, U. S. National Museum.